

TOWN Reminder

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Student Union starts 'the fight against inequality'



Courtesy photos from Maura Doolittle
Sophia Kennedy, a member of the South Hadley Student Union, speaks to students and residents gathered outside of the high school on Aug. 1 during a vigil to honor all those who have lost their lives to police brutality.



"We started the student union at our high school to fight against inequality issues and any other racial justice issues that may arise within the community."

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – An active group of South Hadley High School students recently organized an Aug. 1 vigil that honored those who have lost their lives to police brutality or suffered from inequalities.

Last Saturday's initiative served as the debut project for the recently established student group, the South Hadley Student Union. A score of residents joined the students in the high school parking lot, lighting candles and taking a knee to memorialize all who have fallen victim to racial injustices.

"We started the student union at our high school to fight against inequality issues and any other racial justice issues that may arise within the community" said Sophia Kennedy, a rising junior. "It's really powerful that our entire community can come together to show that we are dedicated

Please see **VIGIL**, page 8

Schools will have phased in fall

By MELINA BOURDEAU
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – The South Hadley School Committee unanimously approved a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the South Hadley Education Association for a phased reopening this fall in what was described as "one of the most consequential meetings of their lifetimes" by School Committee Chair Kyle Belanger.

The six-hour meeting included presentations from each of the schools about proposed opening plans. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education required school committees around the state to submit a fall reopening plan by Aug. 10.

The school year will begin on Sept. 14, with kindergar-

Please see **SCHOOLS**, page 15



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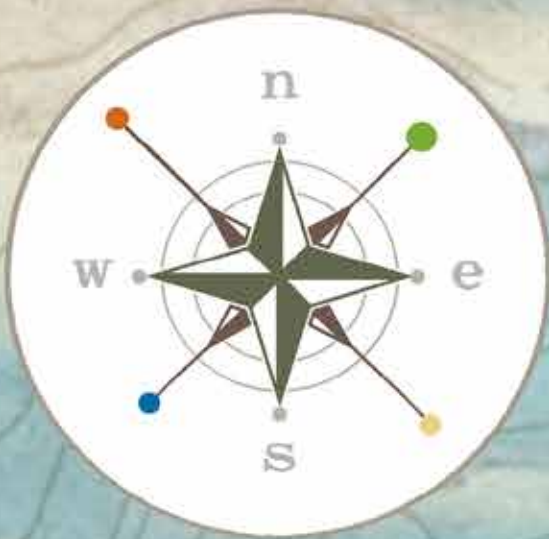
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Cards for vets

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – For the veterans still residing at the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke, a year of difficulty is showing no respite. Months after the facility was plagued by a COVID-19 outbreak that killed 100 residents, seven staff members and four veterans tested positive for the virus earlier this week.

Amid the turmoil, local organizations and establishments have launched a variety of initiatives to help boost morale in the Soldiers’ Home. The South Hadley Public Library has partnered with Veterans Dragon Boat USA, a Holyoke-based dragon boat team, to send a care package to every veteran who remains in the facility.

“We were aware that there are obviously restrictions for visitation but wanted to give back and came up with the idea of creating these care packages; similar to what had been done in earlier wars that were sent to soldiers stationed abroad,” said Anna Symington, co-founder of Dragon Boat USA, the nation’s only sustaining all-veteran dragon boat team.

It is Symington’s hope that each package will include items “that the veterans can take joy in.” With that in mind, she called upon local youths to contribute.

“We would love to have children in the community draw and create thank you cards for the veterans,” said Symington. “For children, when they see a veteran or someone in uniform, they view them as heroes; as people of significance. I think when the veterans open these cards, they see that it’s coming from a very innocent



The South Hadley Public Library has partnered with the Veterans Dragon Boat USA, an all-veteran dragon boat team based out of Holyoke, to collect child-made cards to deliver to the veterans who reside in the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke.

place and that it drives that home for them.”

Symington originally hoped to collect 150 thank you cards. As of Aug. 5, she had already received more than 400.

The South Hadley Public Library is one of numerous libraries in western Massachusetts that have taken up the project. Symington has been more than pleased with the widespread response to her team’s call to local families to contribute.

“Through word of mouth different communities looking for creative projects for children to do at home have embraced it; they think it’s a wonderful idea,” she said. “We’re excited and very grateful for everyone who has stepped forth. It looks like we’ll have many cards to put in each package, which we really hope will bring some smiles to the veterans that are residing at the home.”

Children are encouraged to draw whatever they would like “as long as it makes a veteran smile and feel special,” as is listed on a poster released by the SHPL. Parents can contact the library to pick up a

packet of four cards for their child or children to create.

When cards are finished, parents should call the library and confirm a time to drop off the cards. The library will then deliver the cards to the care packages.

Symington firmly believes that the project’s value should not be understated. She has been especially impressed by local parents who have tailored the project into an educational experience for their children.

“The parents seem to be embracing this as something that their children can do, and we can see that some of the parents are taking the time to explain to the children that these men and women went forth to protect our country and were willing to give up their lives,” said Symington. “That’s something very significant and something to be proud of.”

The South Hadley Public Library is located at 2 Canal St. and can be reached at 413-538-5045. The building is open for pick up or drop off Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Town official warn against rising threat of Covid

Numbers increase in South Hadley

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – Town Administrator Mike Sullivan used the Aug. 5 Selectboard meeting as a platform to warn residents about the rising threat of COVID-19. The virus has taken the lives of at least 25 residents this year and is further broadening its reach.

“The numbers continue to increase in South Hadley,” said Sullivan. “We put a lot of work into getting these rates down. South Hadley has been an incredibly cooperative community, and hopefully we don’t throw it all aside by becoming careless and letting the numbers grow.”

As of Tuesday, South Hadley had registered 175 confirmed cases, 148 contact cases, nine probable cases and three suspect cases of the virus, reported Executive Assistant to Administration, Kristin Maher during the virtual meeting.

Selectboard Vice Chair Sarah Etelman shared that there 438 newly confirmed cases on Aug. 5 and advised residents to take necessary precautions.

“This is the largest increase that we’ve had since the middle of June,”

Please see COVID THREAT, page 8



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South Hadley among towns hit by Isaias



There were several snapped utility poles in South Hadley after Tropical Storm Isaias



A tree fell onto a residence in South Hadley as a result of Tropical Storm Isaias this past week.



There were roads temporarily blocked while SHEL, South Hadley DPW, police and fire fighters responded on scene during Tropical Storm Isaias.

Town experienced power outages, tree damage

By MELINA BOURDEAU
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – Among many towns in western Massachusetts, South Hadley faces power losses and downed trees as a result of Tropical Storm Isaias this week.

Facing these issues were first responders from both fire districts, police, members of the Department of Public Works and South Hadley Electric Light Department worked to remove trees, restore power and maintain the safety of residences throughout the storm.

Director of the Department of Public Works, Chris Bouchard said the town faired “as good as you can with a tropical storm.”

He estimated it will take the department about a week to clean up all the damage from the storm.

He reported some areas hit harder than others in town and the DPW was out for five hours and come back to clear some streets in the middle of the night.

SHEL General Manager, Sean Fitzgerald said their department began receiving calls at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday evening, experiencing upwards about 400 to 500 people without power.

“There was some severe damage – seven utility poles snapped in half or a tree limb tore them from the

ground,” he said. “We worked through the night trying to reset poles and power lines.” He said, as of 4 p.m. on Wednesday, there were less than 50 customers who did not have power restored.

On Wednesday, the department worked on restoring house services.

“This is the most severe intense storm we’ve had this year,” he said “It had a southerly wind and we experienced a lot of damage in a short period of time. It’s the worst we’ve seen this summer.”

South Hadley Fire District 1 Capt. Jim Pula said the department’s main concern, aside from life safety, was powerlines.

“There were some arching, or live, because of the pulled down trees,” Pula said. “We had a lot of calls due to trees compared to storms I’ve seen. I was surprised to see how high the winds were.”

He said in storms like Tuesday’s it’s best for the public to stay indoors if possible.

“In storms like this, take shelter – there so many branches falling – that’s how people get seriously injured,” he said. “If you see power lines down, stay away from them and notify the authorities.”

In District 2, South Hadley Fire Chief Todd Calkins said the groups worked hand in hand with one another to face the storm.

“I believe we responded to 15 different addresses in the next two to four hours, from 4:30 on,” he said. “The district one chief and I were in communication before the event and we all worked together – during these storms,



Photos courtesy of Todd Calkins

Trees damaged utility poles and homes during the storm on Tuesday and there were no injuries related to the storm, according to South Hadley first responders.

all we can do is make sure everyone is safe and away from lines. We had 15 personnel in all different units – we all worked together and got the job done. SHEL and the DPW haven’t stopped.”

He said there were several calls that stood out to him over the course of the evening on Tuesday.

“One that stands out the most was a house struck by a tree on Amherst Road that penetrated the roof and went into the second floor,” he said. “Near the golf course there were three to four telephone poles that snapped with extensive damage. SHEL was there until almost midnight.”

Calkins added that this summer has had an unusual number of “tough storms.”

“I’ve been doing this for 34 years and this summer’s storms are not normal,” he said. “Thinking to the last one, when Silver Street was got hit hard again.”

Each department prepared ahead of the storm including preparing extra personnel if needed, fueling vehicles and equipment and cleaned storm basins and communicating with the public via social media.

Bouchard advised residents to sign up for the Civic Ready notifications if they haven’t already. “You can get notified by text, call or email and the messages provide up to date information as events like this develop,” he said. “You want to know what things are going on during these events, sign up for it.”

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Granby fire chief terminated

Selectboard discusses department future

By MELINA BOURDEAU
Staff Report

GRANBY – The Granby Selectboard discussed the plan following the termination of Granby Fire Chief John Mitchell Jr. on July 23.

During executive sessions, the board discussed Mitchell’s employment with the town and determined in a July 22 executive session to terminate him, effective the next day.

Mitchell was placed on unpaid administrative leave from the Fire Department for 30 days, since June 1, according to Town Administrator Christopher Martin.

Since June 1, Deputy Chief Bruce Carpenter has been working as acting chief of the department, however he recently notified the board he would be retiring in September.

Martin told the board in its meeting on Monday that Carpenter will be serving until Sept. 9 and asked the board how they want to move forward with finding a replacement.

Selectboard member Jay Joyce said if the board was going to post the position, he would recommend the board open it to applicants from outside of the department.

“I think the residents deserve the best qualified person available,” he said. “It should be open to the outside, which includes inside (the department).”

Selectboard Chair Glen Sexton said he thought it would be better for the town to find a temporary replacement.

“I think at this time we’re looking for another interim fire chief,” he said. “In regard to looking for someone for a replacement, I think we should put it out there and look at getting the best candidate and the best person to fill the position.”

He added it might be tough to find a replacement for an interim position. Sexton said he would like to board to put to-

gether a list of qualifications they would like the board to have to be in the position.

Selectboard member Jen Silva said she would like to speak to the officership and get their input.

“Just to get their thoughts on what they’re looking to see take place,” she said. “But I would like interested candidates to submit a resume so we can take a look at what we have. I would like to stay within the department if we possibly can.”

Joyce suggested looking to David Seiffert, who served as fire chief for 21 years in Granby.

“I believe using him as a technical person to help us,” Joyce said. “Let’s face it, we’re not firemen...getting someone like him to be there to help create questions for us. He would be a good technical advisor.”

The board decided to schedule a meeting with the officership on Aug. 10. For those that can’t make the meeting, the people are encouraged to send the Martin an email or submit a letter to the town with comments.

The Selectboard sent a letter of notification to Mitchell dated June 1, notifying him of “the town’s intention not to renew (his) contract as of July 1, 2021,” according to the letter.

The letter was signed by Selectboard members Glenn Sexton and Jennifer Silva.

On May 7, Mitchell resigned from his position as veteran’s agent for the town via email, according to Martin. South Hadley Veteran’s Agent, Michael Slater is filling that position for the time being.

On May 27, in an executive session, Mitchell, Attorney Andrew Gambaccini and Attorney John “Jack” Collins discussed three letters submitted by Granby firemen referencing an April 30 incident, according to the May 27 executive session minutes.

The meeting discussed an incident where firefighters were on their way to

Please see **CHIEF**, page 13



U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy III visited Interstate Towing in Chicopee and the Holyoke Community Health Center in Holyoke on August 3 as he visited numerous communities in western Massachusetts.

Kennedy visits western Mass.

Interstate Towing, Holyoke Community Health Center among stops

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

CHICOPEE–U.S. Rep. Joseph Kennedy III is traveling the state as he campaigns to unseat incumbent U.S. Sen. Ed Markey. On the afternoon of Aug. 4, Kennedy dropped in on numerous communities in Western Massachusetts, including Interstate Towing in Chicopee and the Holyoke Community Health Center in Holyoke.

“We went around western Massachusetts today and had several great visits,” said Kennedy, who spoke on an array of subjects during his multiple appearances.

Kennedy, 39, has served Massachusetts’ 4th Congressional District as a U.S. representative since 2013. Kennedy’s pursuit of a Senate seat brought him to the

western side of the state on Monday and, in the process, broadened his horizons.

“We’re running around the state getting feedback; talking about how we recover from COVID-19 and most importantly what small businesses are saying, what families need and what communities need to make sure that we are never so vulnerable to a crisis like this again,” said Kennedy.

Declaring that “good intentions” alone will not bring the country relief, Kennedy highlighted the importance of establishing sound policies that are based off of community input. To accomplish this, Kennedy has embarked on a 29-day journey across the Commonwealth.

“You’re not going to have an idea of what a community’s needs are if you’re not there or present; if you’re not asking people what they’re feeling, what they’re seeing and how they can help. That’s what we’re continuing to do today,” said Kennedy.

Please see **KENNEDY**, page 15

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GUEST COLUMN

Can I get a widow’s benefit if I’m on disability?

By Russell Gloor
Guest columnist

Dear Rusty: I was recently approved for my Social Security disability benefits. Will I still be able to get my widow’s benefits when I turn 60, which is right around the corner? Or do I lose those because I am disabled? *Signed: An Uncertain Widow*

Dear Uncertain Widow: You will not lose your survivor (widow’s) benefits because you are now collecting Social Security Disability Insurance benefits. You can get the survivor benefit if it is more than your SSDI benefit and provided that you did not remarry before age 60 (and remain married). If you are entitled to and claim a survivor benefit while on SSDI, it will come as a separate supplemental payment which, along with your SSDI benefit, equals the amount you are due as a widow.

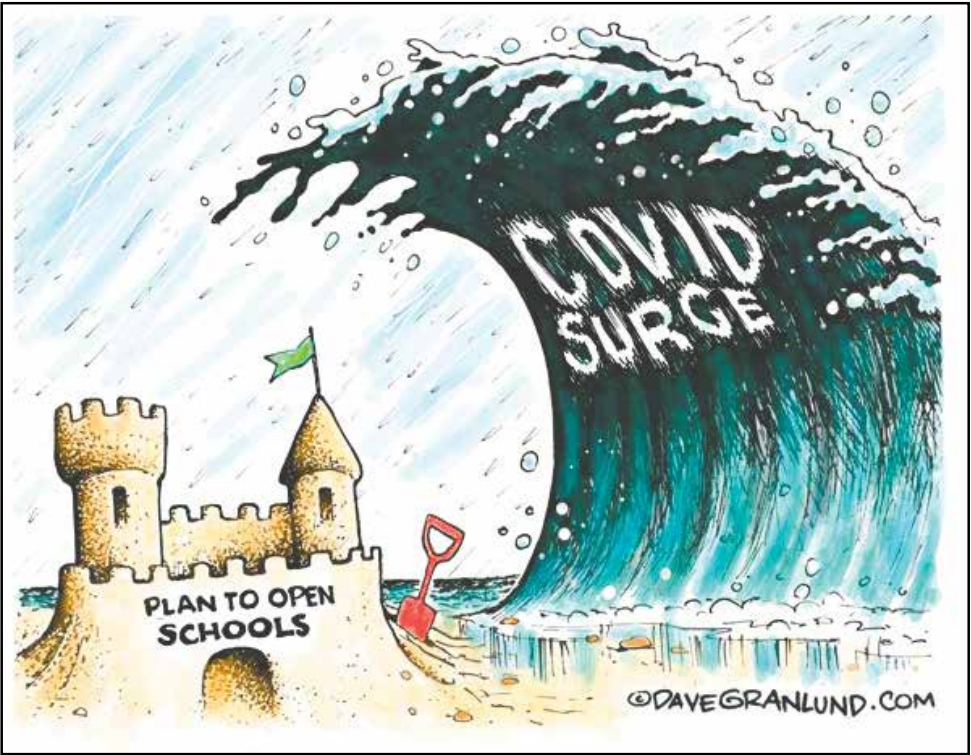
If you are now on SSDI you can actually take your survivor benefit before age 60 because survivor benefits can be taken as early as age 50 if you are disabled. But claimed at age 60 or earlier, the survivor benefit will be reduced by 28.5% from what it would be if you wait until your full retirement age (FRA) of 67 to claim it. If you are collecting both SSDI and the survivor supplement when you reach your full retirement age, it will automatically convert to one payment equal to what you’re entitled to as a survivor (SSDI benefits stop at full retirement age).

It would be prudent for you to evaluate whether you should continue with your SSDI benefits only for a while and allow your survivor benefit to grow to a higher amount. At age 67, your survivor benefit as a widow will be 100% of the amount your deceased husband was receiving, or entitled to receive, at his death. But claiming it before your full retirement age will mean it will be cut by 4.75% for each year earlier than your FRA that you claim it. You can find out your full survivor benefit amount by contacting Social Security.

Your survivor benefit will reach maximum at your full retirement age, and it does not expire so you can delay up to age 67 to claim if you wish (to get the maximum amount as a widow). But if your financial situation is such that you need the reduced survivor benefit earlier, and your benefit as a widow is more than your SSDI benefit, you can claim it at any time. Survivor benefits must be applied for directly with the Social Security Administration, which you can reach by phone at 1.800.772.1213, or at your local office (find the phone number for your local office at www.ssa.gov/locator). Note that all Social Security offices are temporarily closed to in-person visits by the public, so telephone is your only current option to apply for your survivor benefit, until after the pandemic closure is lifted.

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Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Air pollution shouldn’t be overlooked

There is a cartoon in which a man is screaming at climate change protesters saying, “What if we stop the climate crisis and the only change is clean air?” Air pollution has long been linked with the deaths of thousands. Stroke, lung cancer, asthma, emphysema or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease and now

COVID-19 are due in large part to air pollution. The Stockholm Environment Institution has just published a report linking the Climate Crisis with air pollution and then air pollution to the worst cases of COVID-19. Sadly, those least responsible for the Climate Crisis will be the most hurt by it.

John Howard

IN THE GARDEN

A summer shrub laden with blooms

I love to admire other people’s gardens. While it’s hard to spot perennials and flowering annuals from 35 mph, it’s a bit easier to admire a good-looking shrub. This time of year the Rose of Sharon fits the bill.

The Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*) is also known as Shrub Althea. It is a member of the mallow family, a diverse bunch of plants that include hollyhocks, marsh mallows, cotton, okra and even tropical hibiscus as kin. *Hibiscus syriacus* is native to Asia but had already found a home in North America by 1600. In the 19th century it was among the most popular shrubs in the nursery trade.

This deciduous shrub will grow happily in zones 5 to 8. It has an upright growth habit that lends itself well to all types of combination plantings. I have seen Rose of Sharon used in foundation plantings, as stand alone hedges, and as the backdrop for perennial borders. Likewise, a single shrub can be trained to be an outstanding specimen.

Because its flowers are borne on new growth rather than old, pruning can be accomplished in late winter or early spring without the risk of sacrificing blooms. As with most shrubs, concentrate first on removing any dead branches, then remove those that are crossing or rubbing on one another. If growth needs to be checked, cut well into the shrub to decrease its height and girth. Cutting back to a bud that points outward and in the direction of least competition will result in a bushy, less lanky shrub, one suitable for use as a specimen. Frequent pruning results in fewer but larger flowers, whereas no or little pruning gives way to many small flowers.

Plant the Rose of Sharon in full sun or partly shady situations. Although it is tolerant of many types of soil, from seashore

sandy to wet, this shrub prefers deep, well-drained soil to perform its best. Fertilization is rarely necessary. Although Japanese beetles are said to favor the flowers, I haven’t had much of a problem with them.

Do you have an especially nice variety in your yard that you’d love to share? Propagation is easy! So easy, in fact, that I had cuttings root last year without even trying to do so. You see, I used the prunings from an overgrown Rose of Sharon as a trellis for my peas. Once the peas were gone by I began to pull out the branches. Two had mysteriously taken root! To intentionally propagate this plant, simply take a softwood cutting four or five inches long in early summer. Remove lower foliage and insert into the ground in a shady location. Water as needed. By seasons end roots will have likely formed, but wait until spring to move your cutting to a nursery bed. Seeds of the Rose of Sharon have also been known to sprout under the mother plant, sometimes to the degree of being a nuisance. Grow these seedlings on and see what color flower you get; there is no guarantee it will be the same as mother.

Yes, and what about those beautiful flowers? So far we’ve covered everything but! Single or double hibiscus-shaped flowers come in shades of red, pink, purple and white, depending on the cultivar. Like those of their tropical cousin, individual Rose of Sharon flowers bloom for a single day, close at night, then eventually drop from the plant. Even at that rate, flowering occurs for many weeks throughout August and September. In my opinion, single-flowered cultivars are more desirable; they put on a better show and are more tolerant of rainy weather. Double types turn to mush after a rainstorm,

Please see **GARDEN**, page 8

A QUOTE

of NOTE

“Just because we live in South Hadley does not mean that we are only South Hadley. We are still part of the greater America and the greater world; we need to make sure that problems like (racial inequality) are being addressed and taken care of. If we don’t do it, who will?”

Maura Doolittle, a rising South Hadley sophomore said in the story “Student Union starts the fight against inequality.”

OPINION PAGE/
LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed. Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to townreminder@turley.com. Mailed letters can be sent to Town Reminder, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

TOWN
Reminder

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SHPD swears in new officer, promotes another

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – On July 16, a ceremony was held outside of the police station on Bridge St. to swear in Ofc. Emily Tebo and Sgt. Douglas Percy, who was promoted from the position of officer. For both Tebo and Percy, the day was the culmination of countless hours of mental and physical preparation.

“It was shocking because you don’t expect it. You just never know. For how many years I’ve been here; you just never know what’s going to happen,” said Percy, who joined the department in the early 1990s as a reserve officer and was sworn in full-time in 1997.

Percy has proven to be one of the department’s most versatile members during his two-plus decades on the job. He’s completed grant-writing, issued radar equipment certifications, worked as a car seat technician, is an EMT and has served as a breath test operator for more than 20 years.

For the past two years, Percy served as a School Resource Officer in Michael E. Smith Middle School. His promotion will take him out of the school and onto new responsibilities.

“I’ll mainly be working on the roads supervising other officers,” said Percy, who then explained



Town Clerk Carlene Hamlin swears in Sgt. Douglas Percy into his new position on July 16.

how the profession has evolved during his career.

“The Electronic Age has definitely advanced everything,” he said. “When I first started, we were actually typing reports using a typewriter and inking fingerprints. We’ve been able to advance to electronic fingerprinting and computerized the department as far as keeping records and databases.”

Percy grew up in South Hadley and remains there still. Serving his hometown is as meaningful to Percy now as it was his first day on the force.

“It’s incredible in the sense that a lot of the people who are still in the community are probably people that you’ve grown up

with,” he said.

As a sergeant, Percy anticipates being able to mentor young officers. He’s also excited to absorb knowledge from them.

“I can learn from them too because they’re bringing a whole different perspective,” he said. “Some of [the new officers] I’m almost twice the age of, which is funny. It’s interesting learning the difference in their generation compared to my generation. They’re the tech savvy group, and we’re the old school group.”

Tebo is a member of the younger generation that Percy referenced. After graduating from UMass Amherst in 2012 with a bachelor’s degree in communications disorders, the Shrewsbury



Town Clerk Carlene Hamlin swears in new Ofc. Emily Tebo into the department during an outdoors ceremony on July 16.

native was employed by the South Hadley department as a Public Safety Telecommunicator in 2014.

After completing the 60th Recruit Officer Training Class at the Western Massachusetts Police Academy earlier this year, Tebo returned to the station as an officer on July 16 and is grateful for the platform to serve the town.

“South Hadley has kind of become my second home, and I’m very excited for the opportunity to continue to serve my community in a new role,” said Tebo, who elaborated on the benefits of being a dispatcher for the past six years.

“It’s helped immensely; being able to talk to people all day every day when I was a dispatcher, whether they were stressed out or

having a neighbor dispute or they needed an ambulance or were having an emergency situation. It really was an invaluable experience to be able to speak to people in all types of situations,” she said.

Operating out of a familiar environment has made Tebo’s transition smoother. When asked to describe the climate inside the department, Tebo responded without hesitation.

“We all get along really great. If I ever have a question about anything I don’t hesitate because there’s not one person that I wouldn’t be able to ask,” said Tebo. “One of the advantages of having a smaller department is being able to rely on each other.”

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COVID THREAT from page 3

said Etelman. “Things are not going in the right direction so keep doing what you need to do to keep safe.”

Sullivan urged townsfolk to practice social distancing, stay at home, wear face coverings, wash their hands and avoid large crowds. He also made it clear that there have likely been more than 25 South Hadley residents killed by COVID-19.

“With those 25 deaths, we caution about that number because there’s an incredible lag of sometimes two weeks or more [before the state informs the town] if a South Hadley resident was in a hospital or care facility and [succumbed] to Covid; it may not get recorded in the same week. It might show up weeks later,” Sullivan added.

South Hadley’s Emergency Management/Health Director, Sharon Hart, is tracking at least one probable case of a South Hadley COVID-19 fatality that has not yet been included in the town’s statistics.

“There could be 26. We’re trying our best to get these numbers straight, but it is difficult with the state reporting system,” said Sullivan.

Regarding recreation, the town was recently forced to take a step backwards. Only weeks after the basketball hoops in multiple town parks were re-installed, they’ve now been removed once more.

“The people who played were upset about that, but it just got to the point where there were 20 or 30 people at each court,” said Sullivan. “We found out that other surrounding towns had already taken down their basketball hoops, so we were having more and more people come in larger crowds.”

The action was not “punitive,” Sullivan added. He expressed that it was simply taken because the town discourages against residents playing sports at this time.

Following a conversation with South Hadley High School Athletic Director, Eric Castonguay, Sullivan stated that athletic activities and practices that have occurred on the high school athletic fields “are not part of any organized sports from the schools.”

As the COVID-19 threat increases, the town is only capable of heeding warnings for now. Sullivan warned that fines may soon be levied against individuals and establishments who blatantly violate safety protocols.

“In a number of cases, we can only give advice. We are not in a position to risk police going in and making arrests, but we do investigate and monitor. If there’s a responsible party who can be fined, we will fine them,” said Sullivan. “We have a number of incidents that are under investigation right now where we’ve had complaints from the public that businesses are not practicing the protocols that they need to. We’re trying to be sensitive and address those needs but we also have to start to be a little bit more diligent in our enforcement.”



Courtesy photo from Maura Doolittle

At the South Hadley Student Union vigil, the students wrote the names of people of color who died due to police brutality in chalk on the pavement.

VIGIL from page 1

to making change and that we are dedicated to making it now.”

The student-led protest sought to educate residents on various issues that exist in South Hadley. Nic Long and her fellow student union members aim to address “homophobia and any inequity problems that arise in our community.”

All South Hadley High School students are welcome to join the union.

Long mentioned that detractors who criticized the group’s formation have failed to sway it from spreading knowledge.

“Since we started this union, we’ve actually gotten a lot of backlash with people saying that [racism] isn’t a thing in our community. For there to be change, people have to be updated on what’s going on,” said Long. “We can’t respond back [to injustices] with hate and we can’t respond violently so we have to inform them in a polite way. It’s happening, it’s everywhere and you have to start educating yourselves.”

Maura Doolittle, a rising sophomore, was moved by the diverse collection of residents that attended the vigil. After weeks of preparation, she was thrilled to participate in such a powerful vigil.

“It’s truly inspirational,” said Doolittle. “Seeing so many people here from different cultures and ethnicities is absolutely flabbergasting. I think that this is so important; it’s an absolute necessity for our school and our community.”

Doolittle volunteered as the event’s photographer on Aug. 1. As she made her way around the parking lot and interacted with those in attendance, she said she was extremely encouraged by each participant’s willingness to listen and join the conversation.

“Just because we’re a small town where people don’t see racism as much doesn’t mean that it’s not a

problem,” said Doolittle. “Just because we live in South Hadley does not mean that we are only South Hadley. We are still part of the greater America and the greater world; we need to make sure that problems like this are being addressed and taken care of. If we don’t do it, who will?”

Going forward, the student union will continue to organize and lead community-building projects. Union members have been meeting virtually multiple times a week this summer and are optimistic that additional students will help spark more eye-opening events next school year.

“Putting together the vigil; once we got it going, everything just seemed to fall into place. We all seem to work really well together. It felt pretty natural,” said Doolittle. “Even if you can’t help as much as you think you can or think this won’t do much; it will. If you’re part of the group and doing what you can it will still make a difference.”



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GARDEN from page 6

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Living through history

Local elementary students share their thoughts on COVID-19

SOUTH HADLEY – Much like the rest of the world, children have gone through the pandemic and are experiencing history being made from their homes. Third graders from Mosier El-

ementary School were tasked with a writing assignment about their thoughts and feelings surrounding COVID-19, according to teacher Allyson Saul. This poem could be in any form the students wished and submissions included haiku, acrostic, shape, free verse and rhyming poems. The assignment was created by Leah McCarthy.

By Peyton McLain

My name is Peyton McLain. I am in third grade and when this coronavirus came to our country. I had to do a lot of things different. I can't go to school and can't play with my friends. I can play with my sister, but she is just a baby. And I have to wear a mask if I go outside, I really hope this will end soon. I Am getting very, very bored, but I have been painting a lot of different things.

By Caiden Sypek

We had to stay home. There was nowhere to go, We play board games and card games but they're getting old. The state may be opening up soon, we are told.

By Ben Theroux

Concerned about things. Over the world. Republicans will win in November. Nature will hopefully take it away. Awkward

Virus is contagious. I will stay safe from the virus. Rest will help a sick person. Understand how this works. Sick kids get, get better.

By Matthew Wells

Inside Watching Youtube Playing Roblox No school Google Classroom Google Meets Mom helps me with homework Masks in public all because of this coronavirus!

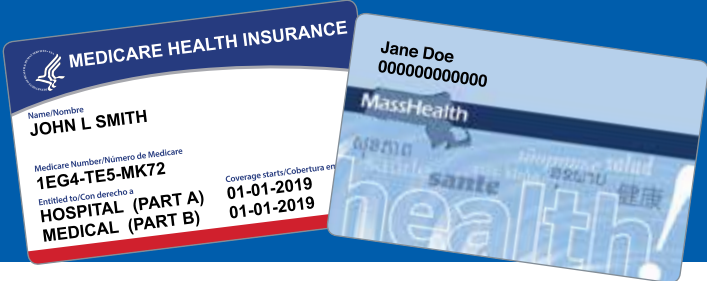
MassWildlife bands Peregrine falcon chicks

Staff report

STATEWIDE – MassWildlife biologists visited nest sites to band peregrine falcon chicks. A total of 46 territorial pairs were documented statewide. Most pairs are nesting on man-made sites such as buildings, bridges and quarry cliffs. A few pairs are raising young on mountainside cliffs in more remote parts of the state. Two new nests were confirmed in Springfield and three historical nests have been reconfirmed in Bourne, Sandisfield and Worcester. MassWildlife biologists successfully banded over 40 chicks with small metal leg bands. Staff use this information to track individual peregrines through observations reported by the public. This helps biologists learn about these protected birds' movements, life span and breeding activity. Web cameras are another useful tool to monitor peregrine nests for eggs, hatched chicks and fledged chicks. A new peregrine falcon nest camera was installed by MassDOT this year at the Gillis Bridge in Newburyport. A male peregrine falcon at a nest site in South Hadley was banded 17 years ago as a chick in Fairlee, Ver-

mont. Peregrine falcons from Massachusetts have dispersed far and wide. A female peregrine banded in May of 2013 in Cambridge at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) campus has established a nest at the University of Montreal. Before restoration efforts, the last active peregrine falcon nest in the Commonwealth was documented in 1955. Nesting failures were due mostly to the eggshell thinning effects of DDT and similar pesticides. The peregrine falcon was listed as endangered in 1969 under the federal Endangered Species Conservation Act and the use of DDT in the United States was banned in 1972. Peregrine falcon restoration became MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program first restoration project in 1984 and is its longest running project to date. The peregrine falcon was removed from the federal list of Endangered and Threatened Species in 1999. In Massachusetts, the peregrine falcon's status under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) the bird's MESA status was improved from threatened to special concern in late 2019.



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Foundation announces National Park Service grant

Staff Report

HADLEY - The Porter-Phelps-Huntington Foundation (PPH) announced the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has received a grant of \$19,050 from the National Park Service (NPS) through the Historic Preservation Fund to support a new National Register historic district encompassing the Foundation's museum property as well as the privately owned Phelps Farm across River Drive/Route 47, which was built by Charles Porter Phelps in 1816 on land once part of the larger farmstead.

This NPS award, an Underrepresented Communities grant, will include updating and expanding existing National Register documentation for the museum property to include information on the enslaved people, indentured servants, and prisoners of war, who worked at the site in the 18th century, in order to provide a broader and more inclusive history of the site. The grant will be administered by the MHC in coordination with PPH.

"We're a small museum closed for the season due to the pandemic and have been relying upon donations and small grants to keep us afloat this year, so this announcement has come at a critical moment and is a wonderful morale booster. We are thrilled about the award and honored to



Courtesy photo

Porter-Phelps-Huntington Foundation has received a grant of \$19,050 from the National Park Service (NPS) through the Historic Preservation Fund to support a new National Register historic district.

be selected as one of only eighteen projects nationwide," said PPH Executive Director Susan J. Lisk. "This new historic district will tell the stories of traditionally underrepresented people who lived, worked, and died here more than 200 years ago, as well as subsequent generations whose varied careers and interests reflect broader social and historical trends in the country up to and including the 20th century."

The existing National Register documentation for the PPH

museum house, now nearly 50 years old, omits these incredibly important stories, so we're excited by the opportunity to ensure this history is documented for posterity and archived here, at the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and at the Library of Congress. We're also excited that the new historic district will encompass the early 19th-century Phelps Farm across the street, which has its own rich history that has never been thoroughly researched or documented. We

have a wealth of archival material to help tell this story and are looking forward to working with the MHC on the project, which is important for the history of the Connecticut River Valley as a whole."

This year, the National Park Service allocated \$750,000 in Underrepresented Communities grant funds. The NPS states that the program "focuses on documenting the homes, lives, landscapes, and experiences of underrepresented peoples who

played a significant role in national history." Grants from this cycle "will help fund eighteen projects to eight states, six tribes, two local governments, the District of Columbia, and the Federated States of Micronesia." The Underrepresented Communities grant program is funded by the Historic Preservation Fund and administered by the National Park Service, Department of Interior.

The Porter-Phelps-Huntington House is an historic farmstead on the banks of the Connecticut River that today interprets life in rural New England over three centuries. Through the words, space, and possessions of the women and men who lived here, the museum portrays the activities of a prosperous and productive 18th-century farmstead. Members of this household along with numerous artisans, servants, and enslaved people made the property an important social and commercial link in local, regional and national cultural and economic networks. In the 19th century the family transformed the estate into a rural retreat. In the 20th century the house was preserved as a museum by family members and now contains the possessions of six generations of this extended family.

For more information, phone 413-584-4699 or check the museum website: pphmuseum.org.

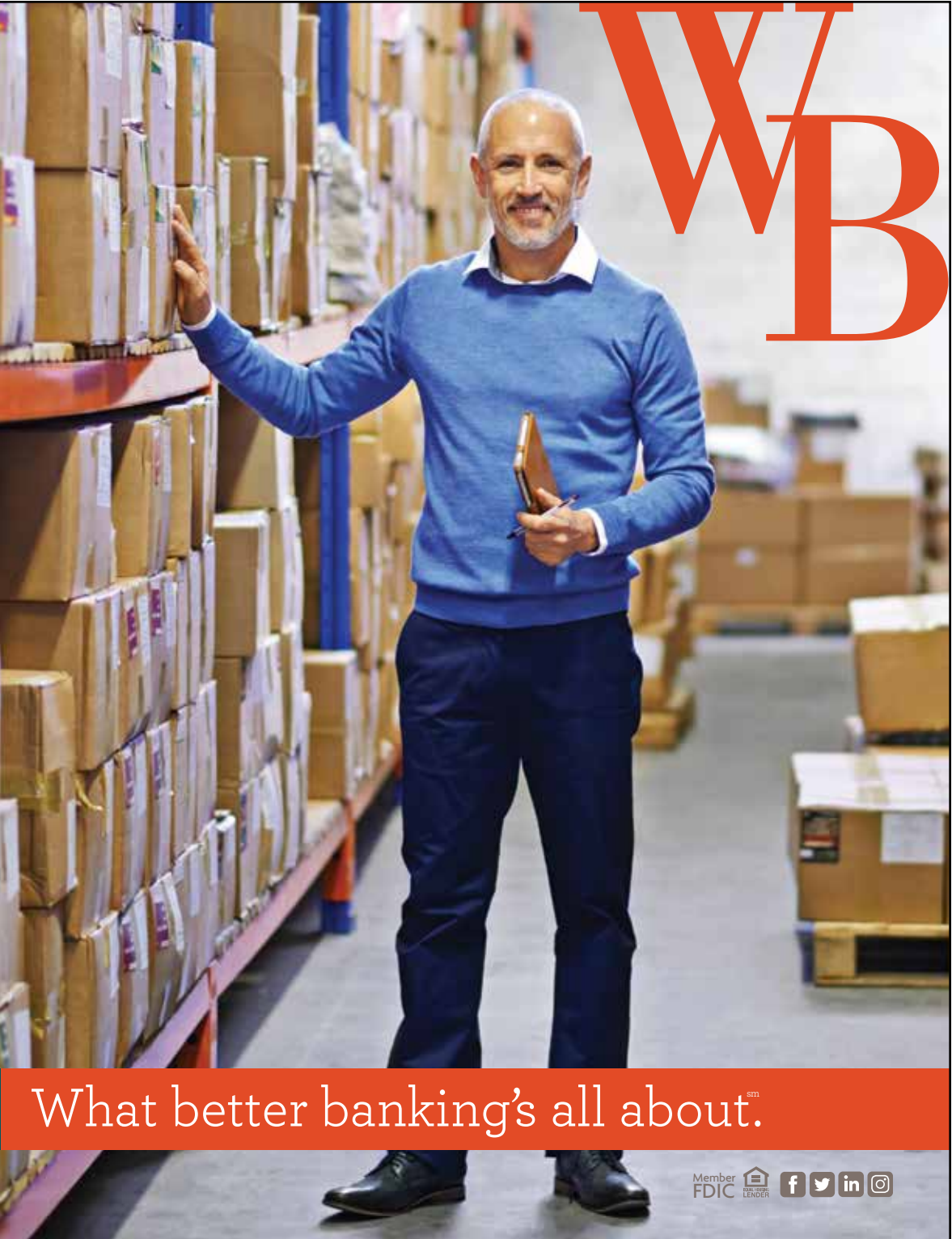
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TMC votes to keep wrestling sectional tournament

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – While the region is in for more delays of high school sports action, the MIAA’s Tournament Management Committee is continuing its work to prepare for the 2021 fall season under what will be new tournament formats and divisional alignments.

In late February, a majority of the member schools in Massachusetts voted in favor of eliminating the sectional tournament and switching to a statewide tournament that would include 32 teams as well as the possibility of playing to qualify if a school finishes with a record of .500 or above.

The move was very unpopular with many Western Massachusetts schools because of the vast diversity in the area, hence the use of the Walker Rating system that has been used to determine tournament seeds in many team sports such as soccer, basketball, field hockey, hockey, baseball, softball, and lacrosse. Central Mass. has also used to the system in some tournaments.

The ranking system was supposed to switch over MaxPreps



Alignments for the new statewide tournaments were held at a TMC meeting on July 28.

for this fall and would have been used to rank the final Western Mass. tournaments. MaxPreps has a proprietary ranking system not revealed publicly, but the MIAA has opted to delay its use for now.

However, now, it is unclear whether a fall season or a tournament will take place in the fi-

nal year to have sectional tournaments through the MIAA.

The Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Association has discussed holding its own sectionals once the state switches over, but the COVID-19 pandemic has caused planning for that to be put on “the back burner” according to PVIAC Board



File photos

Wrestling will be one sport that will get to keep its sectional tournament sanctioned by the MIAA.

member David Stratton, athletic director at Agawam High School.

The PVIAC and other governing boards are looking at the current situation and working on just getting players back on fields safely and following proper safety protocols while the pandemic still exists.

Meanwhile, the TMC began the process of approving some alignments. The first, which was approved at a meeting last Tuesday, was the alignments for wrestling.

Wrestling has always been an

Please see **TOURNAMENT**, page 12



Photo by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Slzats scholarships awarded

Gabrielle Gauvin of Ludlow and Davianna Perez of Chicopee take the ceremonial opening tip-off from Roy LaPlante, organizer of the Szlats Memorial Tournament held in Chicopee each year. It has brought youth girls basketball teams from all over the area together for 26 years. It was one of the last sporting events held before the pandemic started and action was cut off after just one day. LaPlante said he hopes to have the tournament next year, but it will not be rescheduled this year. While money was refunded back to team because there was only a day of action, several teams donated their funds back to Szlats for the scholarships, which went to Averie Gatzounas, Julianna Beaulieu, Caroline Pycko, and Kass Guerrero, all Chicopee students.

Buffone tops in street stock event

WINCHESTER, N.H. – Open-wheel ace Brian Robie (Sunapee, NH) won the NHS-TRA Modified main event Saturday, August 1, at Monadnock Speedway, while second-generation star D.J. Shaw topped the Granite State Pro Stock Series 100-lapper.

Chris Buffone (Belchertown, MA) scored his first Street Stock victory Saturday, and Superman Aaron Fellows (Croydon, NH) stayed undefeated on the year by winning his seventh consecutive Late Model Sportsman feature race. Ed Gilman topped the night’s Classic Lites 30-lapper.

Todd Patnode and Kimmy Rivet led the Mod Squad to the stripe as the night’s 40-lap feature went green. Patnode, the speedway’s reigning Modified champion, was gunning to turn a nightmare 2020 campaign around as the pandemic-shortened season hit its halfway mark.

With Patnode jumping all over the opening lead, Rivet and Cameron Houle, and then Keith Carzello, battled fast and furious for the deuce spot while, charging hard from his row six starting slot, points leader and two-time winner Brian Robie



Submitted photos

Chris Buffone, a resident of Belchertown, wins the Street Stock event last weekend.

was on the hunt.

Rocketing up to fourth on lap 18, Robie took third from Rivet on lap 22, second from Houle two go-rounds later, and pulled up to Patnode’s bumper on lap 30. Taking the lead on his 32nd trip around the high banks, Robie then sped off to victory a half-dozen lengths ahead of Patnode.

Houle earned his first trophy finish of the summer in third, a whisker ahead of three-time

Please see **EVENT**, page 12

Raised COVID-19 concerns cancel Thompson practice, race

THOMPSON, Conn. – Due to mounting concerns over the health and economic effects of COVID-19, Econn Motorsports announced today they are not moving forward with the traditional Bud 150 which had been scheduled for August 19th at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park. An open practice previously scheduled for August 5th has also been canceled. The recent outbreaks of COVID-19 cases associated with professional sporting events was chief among the reasons for the decision.

“We had initially thought that the virus would be of minimal concern by now, but the numbers are still very concerning”, said Terry Eames of Econn Motorsports. “We remain committed to keeping oval track racing alive at Thompson and will continue to work with the Hoenig family about the possibility of events later in the year.”

Baseball clinics to take place in August

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with the John Murphy Youth Baseball League will be conducting baseball clinics. To sign up for the clinic, please contact Coach Terry Murphy at tmurphy1hcc@comcast.net.

Clinics will follow all of the board of health requirements regarding masks, spacing and cleaning of equipment. Players with their own bats and helmets or catcher’s gear are encouraged to bring to the clinic.

Potential Baseball Clinics Schedule

All clinics to take place at Mackenzie Field

Free of charge for Holyoke residents, \$10 for non-residents

Monday, August 10, 10 a.m. to 12 noon (age group 11-13)

Wednesday, August 12, 10 a.m. – 12 noon (age group 7-10)

Wednesday, August 12, 5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. (age group 14-17)

Thursday, August 13, 5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. (age group 11-13)

Monday, August 17, 10 a.m. – 12 noon (age group 7-10)

Wednesday, August 19, 10 a.m. – 12 noon (age group 11-13)

Wednesday, August 19, 5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. (age group 14-17)

Thursday, August 20, 5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. (age group 7-10)

Wednesday, August 26, 10 a.m. – 12 noon (age group 14-17)

Wednesday, August 26 5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. (age group 11-13)

Clinics will be run by former Holyoke Community College baseball coach Terry Murphy. He will be assisted by Bob Praticco, former Holyoke Catholic coach, Mike Afflitto, Smith Academy coach, and Mike Praticco, Amherst High School coach. Added to the coaching staff is Dioni Soriano Bello, a former player in Japan and Latin America. They will also be assisted by several former high school players as well. A trainer will also be on hand for each session!

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Opposite of on

4. Creator

10. No seats available

11. About springtime

12. Flagship ESPN show (abbr.)

14. Automobile

15. A matchup

16. Porous volcanic rock

18. Utter repeatedly

22. Not written in any key

23. Revolved

24. Archival

26. Within

27. Smoker’s accessory

28. Disfigure

30. Primordial matter

31. Thrust horse power (abbr.)

34. Kisses

36. Some is iced

37. A way to derive

39. Unaccompanied by others

40. Discontinued Google app

41. Tony B. left his heart there

42. Condiment

48. Ancient Italian city

50. One who distributes payoff money

51. Guarantees

52. Highly decorative

53. Strike with a stick

54. Pie _ _ _ mode

55. Spanish be

56. Glued

58. A way to drench

59. Part of the body

60. Changes the color

CLUES DOWN

1. Passerine birds

2. Noisy quarrel

3. The front arm or leg of an animal

4. Early multimedia

5. Golden years

6. Large mollusk

7. Small arm of the sea

8. Persian jurisdiction

9. Atomic #81

12. From end to end

13. Adorable

17. Ma

19. Nearly falling

20. Portable conical tent

21. Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues

25. Fish with high dorsal fins

29. Equal (prefix)

31. Aquatic plant genus

32. Choppers

33. Hand parts

35. Region bordering the sea

38. Well-liked

41. Nap

43. It’s used to make beer

44. Related on the father’s side

45. Senior officer

46. Delicacy (archaic)

47. Figures

49. A way to take away

56. Beloved sandwich _ & J

57. Symptom typical of withdrawal (abbr.)



Submitted photos

Brian Robie topped the field in the modified race.

EVENTS from page 11

winner Ben Byrne. Matt Kimball took the checkers in fifth. Byrne and Trevor Bleau, second and third in the points race, both lost valuable ground to Robie in the division’s seventh event of the season.

In the GSPSS 100-lapper, second-generation Maine star D.J. Shaw pulled alongside fast-timer Devin O’Connell on lap 14, took sole possession of the top spot two laps later, and then never looked back as he easily scored his first series win of the summer.

Two-time 2020 series winner Angelo Belsito was second, with fellow two-time and current points leader Ray Christian III third. O’Connell finished his hard night’s work in fourth, while number two points man Joey Polewarczyk fell off the pace on lap 98 while running fourth.

In the Late Model Sportsman 25-lapper it was, who else, Aaron Fellows again, winning for the seventh straight week to stay undefeated this summer with a dozen overall wins against zero losses.

For the second week in a row, Cole Littlewood was the deuce man, watching Fellows inch past him as lap 21 went in the books and then speed away. Number two point man Robert Hagar came home third, just ahead of teen speedster Camdyn Curtis.

Street Stock points leader Jaret Curtis spun in a cloud of tire smoke before lap one of the Streeter’s feature race had been completed, having to refire from 15th as his 25-lap journey began again.

Rookie Tim Wenzel led the first two go-rounds, with Belchertown Bullet Chris Buffone then taking over. While Buffone would lead the rest of the way to score his first Street Stock victory, the racing throughout the pack was action-packed and turbulent most of the way.

Chase Curtis claimed second early and tried high and low to find a way to the point while, riding at Curtis’s bumper and sometimes against it, Buffone’s uncle, Tommy O’Sullivan, completed the nose-to-tail top three.

Jaret Curtis got up for fourth with one to go to stay just ahead of his twin brother in the points parade, while Wenzel’s strong run netted him the five spot. Buffone was the sixth different Street Stock feature winner this summer at the high-banked speedplant.

Ed Gilman wired the 30-lap Classic Lites feature, but while the Sandown, N.H. pilot had a fairly easy ride, the ac-



Aaron Fellow won another late model race.

tion behind him was fast and furious. Eric Skofield grabbed second on lap 13 and then chased Gilman the rest of the way, while four-time defending series champ Duane Skofield made a late-race charge to earn the third-place hardware.

Next Saturday, August 8, Monadnock Speedway returns to action with five exciting divisions of weekly racing series action, along with the visiting Granite State Legends and Pro-4 Modified series. For more information, please visit www.monadnockspeedway.com.

STREET STOCKS: Chris Buffone, Chase Curtis, Tommy O’Sullivan, Jaret Curtis, Tim Wenzel, Mike Hopkins, Hillary Renaud, Robbie Streeter, Jason Kozacka Kenny Thompson, Bryan Granger, Paul Barnard, Chris Riendeau, Nathan Wenzel, Ed Brehio

LATE MODEL SPORTSMAN: Aaron Fellows, Cole Littlewood, Robert Hagar, Camdyn Curtis, Justin Littlewood, Hayden Scott, Willie Kuhn, Scott Beck, Nancy Muni-Ruot

NHSTRA MODIFIEDS: Brian Robie, Todd Patnode, Cameron Houle, Ben Byrne, Matt Kimball, Keith Carzello, Trevor Bleau, Cory Plummer, Kim Rivet, Kevin Pittsinger, Solomon Brow, Zach Leone, Jerry Gomarlo, Eric Leclair, Russ Hersey, Brian Chapin

TOURNAMENT from page 11

individual sport with teams scoring points at the major meets. By a 10-2-1 vote, the TMC approved continuing with a sectional tournament as a means of qualifying for the state tournament. Wrestling will not be using a statewide tournament format initially and will remain with a sectional tournament in order for an individual grappler to get to the state tournament. The current format includes having a sectional, followed by a divisional state tour-

namment, an all-state tournament, and then a New England Tournament.

A number of football committee members proposed new alignments for their sport. Their initial proposal was defeated 4-8-2 and will be revisited at another time.

The board also discussed how football would be handled with the delay in sports to Sept. 14. It would wipe out the first four weeks of football season. The issue will be discussed at the next meeting, set for Tuesday, Aug. 18 at 10 a.m. The meeting with be virtual.

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Public Safety

SOUTH HADLEY
POLICE LOG

Compiled by
Melina Bourdeau
townreminder@turley.com

Editor's note: The following are brief explanations of select entries in the South Hadley Police log and arrests for the week of July 20 to Aug. 2. The information was provided by Chief Jennifer Gundersen based on review of the detailed log summary. This feature is designed to provide context and explanation to some of the calls police respond to every day. Mass General Law prohibits the release of names of those arrested for domestic incidents.

Monday, July 20

12:55 a.m. –Police responded to Bardwell Street to assist South Hadley Fire District 1 with an investigation of small fire in the rear of a home and determined it appeared to be accidental.

10:54 a.m. – Officer took a report of identity theft. The reporting party got a bill from a collection agency and upon further inquiry found it was related to account in New Jersey that did not belong to them.

3:20 p.m. – Officers took a report of a resident being scammed out of large sum of money through an online scam.

Tuesday, July 21

3:27 p.m. – Officer took a report of unemployment fraud.

Wednesday, July 22

11:58 p.m. – Officers took a report of an individual who was blackmailed after meeting a person online. The two met online and video chatted. Following the video chat, the person threatened to send an explicit video to the reporting parties' friends on social media if the reporting party did not pay a sum of money. The reporting party realized the profile was not real. He was able to negotiate the price and money was sent to party in the Philippines.

Thursday, July 23

2:39 a.m. – Officers responded to Woodbridge Street for a report of a crash. The vehicle was travelling southbound when they failed to negotiate the turn in area of South Hadley Fire District 2, crossed over the lane and struck parked cars. The operator reported they fell asleep and was transported to Holyoke Medical Center by ambulance.

9:40 a.m. – Officers responded to Brainerd Street for a motor vehicle crash. The accident occurred when a vehicle towing a trailer pulled to the side of the road, stopped and prepared to back into a driveway in the area. The operator of the vehicle behind the trailer failed to recognize the vehicle stopped and crashed in the rear of the trailer and vehicle. No injuries were reported.

Saturday, July 25

2:41 a.m. –Loida Rivera, 41, of 51 Avon Plane, Springfield, was arrested on charges of trespassing and operating under the influence of alcohol.

8:46 p.m. – An officer was working detail at when they received a report from individual about another operator in the parking lot driving recklessly. The matter is under investigation.

Sunday, July 26

12:10 p.m. – Officer took a report of scam. The reporting party said they made arrangement to purchase a dog online, sent money the seller. When the seller requested an additional \$2,000 for an insurance fee the reporting party then realized was a scam.

2:02 p.m. – Officers took a report of a motor vehicle crash after an unoccupied vehicle rolled from its parking spot colliding with chain link fence. No injuries were reported, but there was damage to the fence and car.

3 p.m. – Connecticut River task force officers were in the area of rainbow beach when they noticed a group of people on jet skis. One of the operators turned sharply, resulting in crash and ejecting the operator and a passenger into the water. The passenger complained of ankle injury but

declined medical attention. Officers found the watercraft wasn't registered and the operator was charged with unsafe operation and unregistered vehicle.

4:46 p.m. – Officers issues a summons to court after a racing incident. The officers observed two vehicles at an intersection lined up, side by side at a red light. When signal turned green, the officer heard shouting from of two vehicles and the chirping of spinning tires. The vehicles accelerated at high rate of speed through intersection. The officer pulled over the involved parties and advised them they would be summons for racing.

Monday, July 27

7:28 a.m. – Officers took a report of a breaking and entering on Sorbi Circle. The resident reported stolen items including items from a shed as well as koi fish. There is no other information at this time.

3:15 p.m. – Officer took a report of a stolen package from a residence. The matter is an ongoing investigation.

Wednesday, July 28

4:57 – Officers took a report of unemployment fraud.

3:30 p.m. – Lynn Robitaille, 40, of 643 Newton Street, South Hadley was arrested on a warrant.

8:14 p.m. – An officer took a report of illegal dumping after a person threw away a mattress on the side of the road. The South Hadley Department of Public Works was contacted and removed it.

Thursday, July 29

12:03 a.m. – Officers responded to an accident after a vehicle struck a tree in the roadway. The vehicle was travelling south bound when the driver stuck a tree that had fallen across the roadway. The driver reported they were unable to see the tree due to heavy rain and wind. No injuries were reported.

Friday, July 31

12:31 p.m. – Officers took a report of unemployment fraud.

5:55 p.m. – Officer took a call of break-

ing and entering on Sunrise Drive. The reporting party said there were numerous items missing from their home. The party reported there having had individuals in the home recently. The matter is an ongoing investigation.

7:10 p.m. – Officers responded to area of Route 202 for a report of a dump truck and trailer stopped in the grassy center of the rotary. The operator of the dump truck was identified, and it was determined they did not have a license and will be issued a summons to court for charges of unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle.

7:51 p.m. – A Newton Street business owner reported what they believed to be employee theft. They wanted the incident on file.

Saturday, Aug. 1

2:29 a.m. – An officer was travelling on Bridge Street when they observed a vehicle turn onto at onto High Street, crossing the center lane. The vehicle accelerated and the officer activated their lights, attempting to stop the vehicle. The driver crossed into Holyoke. Unable to catch up to the driver, the information was forwarded to Holyoke Police Department. The vehicle was later stopped, and they contacted the South Hadley Police Department. The operator was identified and admitted he was operating the vehicle. The driver was issued a summons to court on the charges of failing to stop for police, a marked lanes violation and speeding.

3:06 p.m. – Officers took a report of an unemployment scam.

4:49 p.m. – Officers responded to the Connecticut River for a report of a hit and run involving two boats.

6:53 p.m. – A Pleasant Street resident called reporting a hit and run accident after someone backed into the vehicle in an off-street parking lot.

Sunday, Aug. 2

6:13 p.m. – Officers took a report of a past breaking and entering into a vehicle on White Brook Lane. The vehicle was unlocked, and a small amount of money was stolen. The matter is still under investigation.

CHIEF from page 5

and from the fire apparatus dealership in Walpole, Mitchell drove at a high rate of speed during rainy conditions.

During this meeting, Martin stated the chief has a “record of dangerous operation,” according to the minutes.

This is not the first time Mitchell has been placed on administrative leave from the department.

He was placed on paid administrative leave for one week in the spring of 2018, following an investigation into the chief's

conduct while on duty, according to Sentinel archives.

From August to September of the same year, Mitchell was on paid administrative leave while an investigation into alleged harassment and hostile work environment were underway.

Mitchell could not be reached for a comment via email by press time.

Tag sales not permitted

The Granby Selectboard also noted that due to COVID-19 tag sales are not permitted at this time, following Joyce's note that he saw several last weekend.

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SCHOOLS from page 1

ten starting on Sept. 21 with phase II reentry meetings, according to the MOA. A phased-in learning plan will begin the year fully remote until Nov. 4.

The MOA also outlines Phase I and Phase II reentry as the following:

“Sept. 2 to 4 and 8 to 11 will be used for professional development... Phase II reentry (for the first 45-day phase will be from) Sept. 14 to Nov. 3 will be used for the agreed upon remote distance learning plan,” according to the MOA. “All Wednesdays from Sept. 16 to Dec. 23, will be considered half days to be used for meetings, curriculum building, wellness check-ins and teacher preparation.”

According to a presentation from acting Superintendent Diana Bonnevill, starting Nov. 4 special populations and teachers will return to the schools and the hybrid model would begin on Jan. 4, 2021. All students would return in person on April 5, 2021.

Any changes between models of remote, hybrid or in-person learning will be negotiated with the union and will be made at the end of each 45-day reassessment period or two weeks after an agreement to change models is reached.

Nov. 4 will mark the second 45-day reassessment period and snow days will be used as remote learning days.

Belanger emphasized the difference between a remote plan and the phased reopening.

“This is a phased re-entry plan; this is a phased reopening. A remote plan would be participating in remote learning all year long. The distinction is massive,” Belanger said. “It’s important people understand this is a phased reopening that has a remote component at least to start.”

Comments from School Nurse

Nurse Eileen Garvey as well as the nursing staff at each of the schools, spoke to the board about the roles of the nurses during hybrid and in-person models.

“There are so many studies coming out now saying that they have just as much of a viral load as an adult does,” Garvey said. “According to my research 40 percent of children can be carriers, it will be difficult to identify them without getting them tested to find out who’s carrying it around.”

She said the nurses in the schools would need additional help in order to be able to perform their daily tasks as well as managing students who may potentially be sick.

On the topic of managing students who might be sick, Garvey said the nurse’s office will be the same as it is however according to state guidelines schools will have to add “a medical isolation room.”

“That room is going to be specifically for students that we consider might potentially have symptoms of COVID-19,” she said. “It’s going to be a way of isolating them from everybody else, until they can get picked up by a family member.”

The room would have to be separate from the nurse’s office, Garvey explained, to make sure children who were going down to take medication or get a band-aid were not being exposed to a child who was suspected to have COVID-19.

Gravey also touched on the fact the nurses will not be able to take any chances.

“The symptoms are so broad that I could have a student with a sore throat and a fever then when I look at their throat, I decide they need a throat culture because they might have strep throat. But, because of these guidelines that child is going to have to go into the isolation room,” she said. “And then that child is going to have to be picked up, then they’ll

have to be involved with pediatricians. Kids that we suspect might be sick will have to be quarantined for 14 days. The only way that they’re getting back sooner will be after five days, because they have to wait five days to get a COVID-19 test, according to the guidelines.”

School Committee weighs in

School Committee members Al-lison Schlachter and Belanger read prepared statements prior to the unanimous vote.

Schlachter said she never thought she would be in the position she is as a parent and member of the school committee, making a decision such as this during a global pandemic.

“I feel bad for all of the lives of the students and the teachers and will continue to experience. I feel angry that we are now in this pandemic and there’s no end in sight,” she said. “I feel hopeful that we will get through it I feel confident that each of us will grow from this tremendous adversity, if we allow ourselves. But mostly I feel resolute and steadfast in my decision that the health and safety of our students, teachers and their families is my top priority, I have to vote in good conscience.”

Belanger said rather than the decision being made at a state or federal level, the decision of how to reopen schools in the fall fell on the shoulders of school committees across the state.

“This entire moment should be owned and driven by public health departments, officials, and officers statewide trickling into the towns. It should put students, staff and public health at the forefront. Period,” he said. “That’s how it should be. It’s impossible not to be haunted by this. Instead this decision is about to be made by a human resources manager, a social worker, a software developer, a labor negotiator and a communications professor.”

KENNEDY from page 5

Kennedy is more than three decades younger than his opponent, an advantage he believes will be critical to any success he might achieve in the upcoming election. He is certain that the U.S. Senate is in dire need of a newer perspective.

“We believe that we’re capable of so much more and so much better and in order to get there we need change,” he said. “That change is not going to come with the same old people and the same old ideas and the same old politicians that have been doing this for the last 50 years. It’s going to come by folks who are willing to roll up their sleeves and dive in to fight for the community and our families as hard as our families are fighting for each other.”

Kennedy is the grandson of former U.S. Attorney General and U.S. Senator Robert F. Kennedy and the son of former U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy II. His family has been a mainstay in American politics for well over a century, but Kennedy pledged that he brings his own unique strengths to the table.

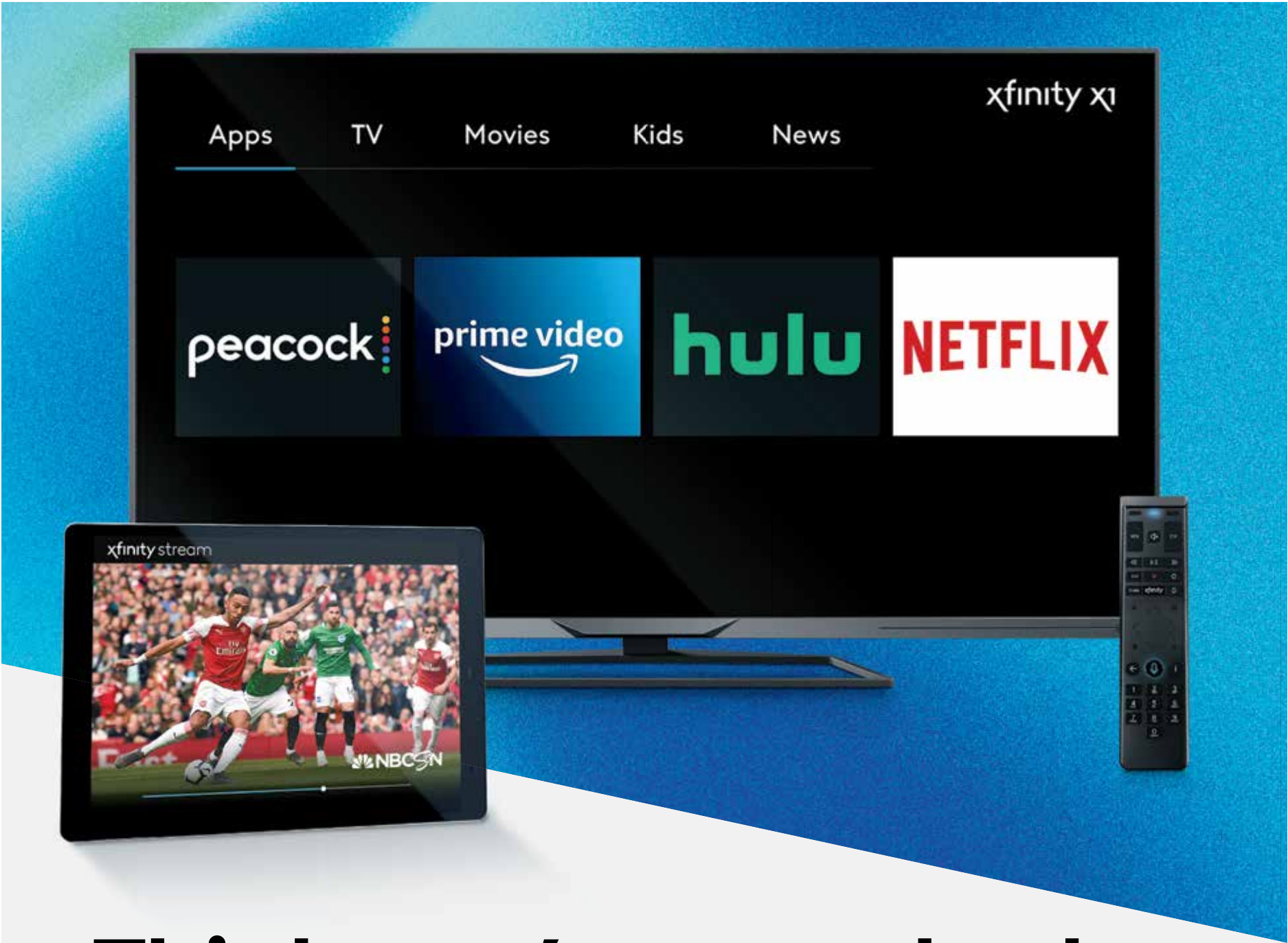
“Look, I’m proud of the contributions that my family has made, and they have, over their relative terms of service, tried to push our country to be a stronger, fairer and more equitable place,” said Kennedy. “I’m trying to do that as well, but without question, it’s my name on the ballot. It’s not my father, my grandfather or any of his brothers. This is on me. All that I ask for is a chance to get evaluated fairly and go out there and earn it.”

Two of Kennedy’s priorities include job creation and education reform. He believes strongly that an equal society is a productive one.

“One of the great promises that our country makes to people is that everyone can acquire the skills that are needed in order to gain access to a good, solid job,” said Kennedy. “The fact is that far too many fall short; we see major inequities that persist. When it comes to reforming our overall education system, I think that we need to roll up our sleeves and dive in.”

He continued on, emphasizing the need to focus on early childcare ranging from birth to five-years-old. Kennedy explained why providing proper resources to the youngest members of our societies is a critical responsibility that has gone overlooked.

“I don’t think it gets enough attention. It costs more money on an annual basis to care for your child from birth to five than it does to send him or her to college. The average cost across the state is over \$20,000 per child per year,” said Kennedy. “Most families can’t come close to affording that, and that means that by the time children are ready to go to Kindergarten there’s already an achievement gap. We need to overhaul our childcare system to ensure that every single child gets access to the early childcare that they need.”



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